

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-02
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 IO-14 ACDA-12 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05
/132 W

-----105252 211040Z /21

R 210710Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6597

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

DIA

USCINCEUR

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CINCEUR FOR POQAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR, PORG, MOPS, MASS, SU, ET, SO, UR

SUBJ: NIMEIRI INTERVIEW: US AND USSR POLICIES; ARMS SALES

SUMMARY: NIMEIRI GAVE INTERVIEW TO AP REPORTER FEBRUARY 11.
SAYING SUDAN NEEDED BETTER AIR DEFENSE, NIMEIRI REVEALED
PUBLICLY FOR FIRST TIME THAT HE NEGOTIATING SQUADRON OF F-5'S
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FROM USG AND "ABOUT TWO SQUADRONS" OF FIGHTERS FROM FRANCE.
ON ROLE FOR USG IN HORN OF AFRICA, NIMEIRI WAS CRITICAL OF
US AND CHARGED US NOT DOING ANYTHING THERE TO OPPOSE
USSR WHICH DISTURBS HIM IN VIEW OF AGGRESSIVE SOVIET
STRATEGY FOR AFRICA. HE WISHES US WOULD ACTIVELY SEEK TO
GET AGREEMENT FROM USSR FOR BOTH BIG POWERS TO STAY OUT
OF AFRICAN PROBLEMS. NIMEIRI FEARS SOVIETS INTEND TO

TEACH SOMALIA SEVERE LESSON FOR THROWING THEM OUT. IN ADDITION, SOVIETS NEED HORN FOR STRATEGIC REASONS, NOTABLY OIL WHICH USSR WILL NEED TO IMPORT IN 1980'S. SOVIETS WILL SUBVERT SOMALIA RATHER THAN ALLOW ETHIOPIA TO CROSS BORDER. KENYA WILL BE NEXT AND THEN SUDAN, BUT SUDAN ABLE TO PROTECT ITSELF AGAINST SUCH SUBVERSION. SUDAN READY TO SEND MILITARY FORCES TO HELP SOMALIA ON REQUEST OF OAU AND ARAB LEAGUE AND WITH CONSENT OF SOMALIA AND ETHIOPIA. NIMEIRI IS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROSPECTS AND BELIEVES SADAT HAS DONE GOOD JOB, BUT PROBLEMS WILL TAKE LONG TIME AND PATIENCE AFTER "VERY GOOD START." NIMEIRI EXPRESSED SATISFACTION AT INVESTMENT HELP IN SUDANESE DEVELOPMENT, PARTICULARLY FROM WEALTHY ARAB STATES. HE MENTIONED FRENCH AND AMERICAN BUSINESS DELEGATIONS COMING TO SUDAN TO STUDY INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES. EMD SUMMARY.

1. NIMEIRI GAVE EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW TO CLAUDE ERBSEN OF ASSOCIATED PRESS FEBRUARY 11. TEXT, BEING POUCHED, RELEASED IN KHARTOUM FEBRUARY 17 ALTHOUGH PARTS WERE REPORTED IN SUNA EARLIER. MAJOR POINT OF INTEREST TO USG WAS COMMENT THAT SUDAN NEGOTIATING TO BUY SQUADRON OF F-5'S FROM USA AND "ABOUT TWO SQUADRONS OF FIGHTERS FROM FRANCE. NIMEIRI SAID AIR DEFENSE WAS NEEDED BY SUDAN. FOR MOBILITY IN THIS LARGE COUNTRY, SUDAN HAS ALSO OBTAINED MILITARY TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT FROM USA AND "FOUR SMALL ONES (BUFFALOES) UNCLASSIFIED

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FROM CANADA." ERBSEN NOTED THAT NIMEIRI IS NOT MAKING ANY ADDITIONAL REQUESTS FOR MILITARY EQUIPMENT. NIMEIRI POINTED OUT THAT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SUDAN

IS SECURED BUT NOT HAMPERED BY MILITARY PURCHASES BECAUSE "MONEY FOR BUYING THESE THINGS IS TAKEN FROM OTHER COUNTRIES BY VERY EASY TERMS."

2. NIMEIRI SAID HE DID NOT SEE ANY CLEAR ROLE FOR AMERICA IN HORN OF AFRICA. USG IS NOT DOING ANYTHING TO STOP INFILTRATION OF SOVIETS IN HORN, ALTHOUGH AMERICANS HAVE SUPPORTED ETHIOPIA FOR MANY YEARS AND STILL HAVE GOOD FRIENDS AMONG ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE WHO NEED US HELP. AMERICAN STAND DISTURBS SUDAN BECAUSE SOVIETS HAVE AN AGGRESSIVE POLICY WHICH SMALL STATES CANNOT STAND UP TO. NIMEIRI HAS MADE KNOWN TO PRESIDENT CARTER AND VISITING CONGRESSMEN THAT HE WISHES MORE ACTIVE US ROLE TO CONVINCE SOVIETS THAT BOTH BIG POWERS SHOULD GO AWAY AND LEAVE SOMALIA AND ETHIOPIA RESOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS WITH HELP OF OAU. SO FAR USG HAS LEFT SOVIETS ALONE IN AREA.

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/132 W

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R 210710Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6598
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
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3. SOVIET STRATEGY IN AFRICA WAS DISCUSSED BY NIMEIRI AFTER
SUMMARY OF ETHIOPIAN AND SOMALI DISPUTE, NIMEIRI THINKS
SOVIETS HAVE BEEN EXPLOITING SITUATION AND ARE WORKING
HARD ON HORN OF AFRICA, WHICH USSR NEEDS FOR STRATEGIC

PURPOSES. SPECIFICALLY, SOVIETS WILL BE SHORT OF OIL IN
1980'S. THEY INTEND TO TAKE WHOLE OF AFRICA AND HAVE
CONCERTED EFFORT IN SOUTHERN AND WESTERN PART FROM ANGOLA,
IN EASTERN PART ESPECIALLY IN HORN AND "IN MIDDLE EAST
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IN THE DESERT." NIMEIRI BELIEVES SOVIETS WILL NOT ALLOW
ETHIOPIA TO ENTER SOMALIA MILITARILY AND THUS LOSE SUPPORT

OF OAU MEMBERS. INSTEAD, SOVIETS WILL SUBVERT SOMALIA. SUDAN IS READY TO SEND FORCES INTO SOMALIA AS PEACE-KEEPING FORCE ON REQUEST OF OAU AND ARAB LEAGUE AND WITH CONSENT OF TWO WARRING PARTIES.

4. NIMEIRI STATED THAT USSR IS TRYING TO TEACH SOMALIA LESSON BECAUSE SOMALIA THREW OUT SOVIET ADVISERS. HE TWICE SAID SOVIETS WOULD CROSS SOMALIA BORDER "BY OTHER MEANS" SUCH AS SUBVERSION. AFTER SETTLING MATTERS IN HORN OF AFRICA, SOVIETS WILL MAKE KENYA NEXT TARGET AND THEN SUDAN. SOVIETS ARE TRAINING KENYANS IN RUSSIA AND ETHIOPIA FOR THIS PURPOSE. ABOUT 2000 SUDANESE STUDENTS ARE "UNDERGOING VERY STEADY TRAINING IN MARXISM AND LENINISM" BUT NIMEIRI ASSERTED THAT "WHEN STUDENTS COME BACK FROM RUSSIA, SAY, AFTER SEVEN OR EIGHT YEARS, THEY WILL JUST HATE RUSSIANS."

5. ON MIDDLE EAST PEACE ISSUES, NIMEIRI STATED THAT HE IS OPTIMISTIC. BATTLE OF PEACE IS MORE DIFFICULT THAN FIGHTING, NEEDS PATIENCE AND LOGIC. HE THINKS SADAT HAS DONE GOOD JOB BY OPENING WAY FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH JERUSALEM TRIP. NIMEIRI NOW WANTS TO GET ALL ARABS TOGETHER TO EXPLOIT THIS OPPORTUNITY AND TO SIT WITH ISRAELIS. PROBLEMS WILL NOT "BE SOLVED IN ONE YEAR OR FEW MONTHS," BUT LONG TIME IS NEEDED. ISRAELIS AND EGYPTIANS HAVE AGREED NOT TO START ANY FIGHTING AGAIN, WHICH IS GOOD START. PATIENCE AND TIME ARE NEEDED TO NEGOTIATE IN SECRET AND NOT ON TELEVISION, RADIO AND NEWSPAPERS. NIMEIRI CITED LONG NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN AMERICANS AND VIETNAMESE IN PARIS BUT SAID SADAT AND ISRAELIS ARE ON RIGHT TRACK. HE POINTED OUT THAT REJECTIONISTS WANT ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL AND PALESTINIAN STATE, JUST AS SADAT HAS BEEN SEEKING, AND REJECTIONISTS UNCLASSIFIED

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DO NOT SAY IN ALGIERS COMMUNIQUE THEY ARE GOING TO OBTAIN GOALS BY FIGHTING. WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO (THAT IS DIFFERENT), HE SAID.

6. NIMEIRI EXPRESSED HIS SATISFACTION WITH MAJOR DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE RECEIVED FROM WEALTHY ARAB STATES, SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT AND ABU DHABI. "THEY ARE DOING VERY FINE." NIMEIRI ALSO REGARDED VISIT IN EARLY FEBRUARY OF LARGE FRENCH INVESTMENT DELEGATION AS SUCCESSFUL AND SAID HE IS LOOKING FORWARD TO VISIT OF SUDANESE-AMERICAN JOINT ECONOMIC COUNCIL, WHICH ALSO CONSISTS OF PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTORS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, ARMS, AIR DEFENSE, MILITARY SALES, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978KHARTO00741
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780077-1020
Format: TEL
From: KHARTOUM
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780233/aaaabcaz.tel
Line Count: 219
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f10361d3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3538558
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NIMEIRI INTERVIEW: US AND USSR POLICIES; ARMS SALES SUMMARY: NIMEIRI GAVE INTERVIEW TO AP REPORTER FEBRUARY 11. SAYING SUDAN NEEDED BETTER AIR DEFENSE, NIMEIRI RE
TAGS: PBOR, PORO, MOPS, MASS, SOPN, SU, ET, SO, UR, (NIMEIRI, JAFAR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f10361d3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014